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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-02 A-01 ICA-11 PA-01 SS-15
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----------032851 062021Z /62
R 060405Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5365

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 07231

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION VP PARTY AFII DTD 4 MAY REPEATED
FOR YOUR INFO:

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER F.)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF V.P. MONDALE: P.S. AT THE AIRPORT

1. WHILE STILL AT AIRPORT, I MENTIONED TO PRESIDENT MARCOS A REPORT SAID TO BE CIRCULATING AMONG NEWSMEN WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY THAT 22 PERSONS HAD BEEN ARRESTED LAST NIGHT IN A PARK IN MANILA PRESUMABLY FOR SOME FORM OF DISSENT I NOTED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO ASCERTAIN THE FACTS BEFORE THE STORY ESCALATED BEYOND RECALL. MARCOS AGREED AND SUMMONED MANILA METROCOM (MILITARY POLICE) CHIEF B/GEN BARBER WHO REPORTED TO ME THAT 29 PERSONS HAD BEEN ARRESTED THE EVENING OF MAY 3 ABOUT 7:00 OR 8:00 P.M. FOR INTENTION TO ILLEGALLY DEMONSTRATE BEFORE THE AMERICAN EMBASSY THAT EVENING. ACCORDING TO BARBER, THE PARTICIPANTS COMPRISING SOME STUDENTS AND COMMUNISTS, ASSEMBLED EARLIER SOME DISTANCE FROM EMBASSY, WAS DISPERSED, REASSEMBLED NEAR THE EMBASSY AND WAS TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, WHERE THEY REMAIN. HE SAID NINE "PILLBOXES" (SMALL EXPLOSIVE CHARGES) WERE FOUND IN THEIR POSSESSION. BARBER CLAIMED THE GROUP INTENDED TO BLOCK THE MOTORCADE OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE ALONG ROXAS BOULEVARD WHEN IT PASSED THE EMBASSY EN ROUTE TO THE STATE DINNER AT THE PALACE. I REPORTED THIS TO PRESIDENT MARCOS
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(AND IN EFFECT TO MRS. MARCOS, WHO WAS WITHIN EARSHOT). I STRESSED THAT THE GROUP WAS STILL IN CUSTODY. MARCOS AT FIRST RESPONDED, "ALL WILL BE RELEASED AGAINST WHO NO CHARGES ARE PENDING;" AND LATER, "YOU MAY ASSURE THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL PLANE THAT I HAVE ORDERED THE RELEASE OF ALL 29."
2. THE MATTER OF THE 29 DEMONSTRATORS HAVING BEEN PURSUED ABOUT AS FAR AS SEEMED PURPOSEFUL, AND MRS. MARCOS HAVING

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SOMEWHAT EMOTIONALLY ALLUDED TO UNFAVORABLE ABC COVERAGE OF THE VISIT (E.G., ALLEGED V.P. INTENTION TO READ RIOT ACT TO GOP, AND "SUMPTUOUS" GOP STATE VISIT), I GAVE MRS. MARCOS THE MESSAGE FROM THE HEART THAT DICK HOLBROOKE AND I HAD AGREED I SHOULD DELIVER AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY, I STRESSED, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AS AN EARNEST OF OUR INTENTION TO CONTINUE TO WORK OUT SATISFACTORILY ALL ASPECTS OF U.S. RELATIONS WITH THE PHILIPPINES. I NOTED THAT IT WAS NATURAL ENOUGH FOR THERE TO BE OCCASIONAL DIFFE ENCES IN THIS ENDEAVOR, BUT THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD PERSEVER MRS. MARCOS APPEARED EMOTIONALLY MOVED AND COMMENTED, "THAN YOU, YES, WE DO FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD. WE MAKE THE EFFORT BU THERE IS STILL SUCH MISUNDERSTANDING OF US." I ADDED THAT WAS UNAWARE OF ANY U.S. MEDIA REPORT THAT THE V.P. HAD COME TO MANILA TO PRESSURE THE GOP, THAT I ASSUMED THE V.P. WOULD DO SOME PRESS BACKGROUNDING ON THE PLANE, AND THAT I WAS SURE HE WOULD WISH TO CORRECT ANY SUCH MISPERCEPTION AS THAT CITED BY HER.

3. SINCE BETSY AND I ARE LEAVING MANILA MAY 6 ON PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION, THERE WERE SOME PROTRACTED FAREWELLS PHILIPPINE STYLE CULMINATING IN PRESIDENT MARCOS' COMMENT, "PLEASE REMEMBER, LEE, THAT WHATEVER UNPLEASANTNESS THERE MAY HAVE BEEN WAS ONLY AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL, AND THAT YOU AND BETSY ARE ALWAYS WELCOME HERE AND REMAIN OUR FRIENDS." I REALLY WASN'T AWARE OF ALL THAT MUCH OFFICIAL UNPLEASANT-
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